

Message Text

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SUBJ: PEKING UNIVERSITY ARTICLE SIGNALS MODERATION ON
EDUCATION, MODERNIZATION FRONTS

REF: A) HONG KONG 0166; B) HONG KONG 0140

1. A PEOPLE'S DAILY ARTICLE JANUARY 7 ON PEKING UNIVERSITY'S
ROLE IN THE EDUCATION DEBATE REVEALS BOTH THE STRICT CONTROL
MAINTAINED BY THE UNIVERSITY PARTY COMMITTEE AND A DESIRE
THAT NEITHER ACADEMIC WORK NOR TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT BE
UPSET IN THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN. IT BEGINS BY DESCRIBING
HOW THE PARTY COMMITTEE HAD TEACHERS, STUDENTS, AND MEMBERS
OF THE WORKER PROPAGANDA TEAM DEVOTE TWO MONTHS TO STUDYING
THE THEORY OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT LAST FALL
BEFORE IT ALLOWED DEBATE TO BREAK OUT, ALTHOUGH MANY
REVOLUTIONARY INTELLIECTURAL WERE "GREATLY DEJECTED"
ABOUT HAVING TO KEEP SILENT. ONCE DEBATE WAS ALLOWED,
THE PARTY COMMITTEE ORGANIZED IT TO MAKE SURE IT WAS
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DIRECTED TOWARD QUESTIONS OF ORIENTATION AND LINE, BY

IMPLICATION AVOIDING DISRUPTIVE ATTACKS ON INDIVIDUALS. THE PARTY ALSO PROMOTED THE POLICY OF -UNITE-EDUCATE-TRANSFORM" TOWARD INTELLECTUALS, A CURIOUS DEVIATION FROM THE MORE COMMON (AND MORE MILITANT) MAOIST PROCEDURE OF "STRUGGLE -CRITICIZE- TRANSFORM".

2. THE ARTICLE IS THE FIRST WE HAVE SEEN TO MEET HEAD ON THE CHARGE THAT "THE REVOLUTION IN EDUCATION HAMPER THE MODERNIZATION OF AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY, NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY". IT DEFENDS THE QUALITY OF THE NEW EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, AND STATES THAT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REVOLUTIONARIES IN EDUCATION AND THEIR CRITICS IS NOT WHETHER MODERNIZATION IN ALL FOUR FIELDS IS REQUIRED, BUT RATHER "WHAT TO RELY UPON AND WHAT TO GRASP FIRST IN ORDER TO BRING ABOUT MODERNIZATION."

3. THIS LATTER POINT IS ECHOED IN TWO ARTICLES FROM THE JANUARY RED FLAG. ONE, AUTHORED BY THE PARTY COMMITTEE OF THE CHAOYANG MODEL AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE IN LIAONING, QUOTES CHAIRMAN MAO TO THE EFFECT THAT ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL WORK WILL GO ASTRAY IF POLITICAL WORK IS NEGLECTED, AND GOES ON TO ARGUE FORCEFULLY THAT "CORRECT POLITICAL VIEWPOINT WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH ACADEMIC WORK AND TECHNICAL STUDIES, ON THE CONTRARY, IT WILL ONLY PROMOTE SUCH WORK AND STUDIES". THE SECOND ARTICLE, A THEORETICAL TREATISE BY CHEN YUEH, DEVELOPS AN ELABORATE REFUTATION OF THE OLD LIU SHAO-CHI CHESNUT, THE THEORY OF PRODUCTIVE FORCES. THE AUTHOR FEELS COMPELLED, HOWEVER, TO ARGUE THAT REJECTION OF THIS THEORY WILL IN FACT HELP SPEED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. ANY VIEW HOLDING THAT CRITICISM OF THE DISCREDITED THEORY WILL ADVERSELY AFFECT THE GROWTH OF PRODUCTION IS "AT LEAST A MISUNDERSTANDING".

4. COMMENT. THESE ARTICLES LEAD US TO TWO TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS. ONE IS TO REINFORCE OUR PREVIOUS IMPRESSION (REF B) THAT, AT LEAST AT PEKING UNIVERSITY AND PRESUMABLY THROUGHOUT MOST OF THE COUNTRY, PARTY CONTROL IS BEING GIVEN HEAVY EMPHASIS IN THE EDUCATION CAMPAIGN. THE SECOND, AND PERHAPS THE MORE IMPORTANT IN THE LONG RUN, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IS THAT SUPPORTERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY LINE ARE THEMSELVES ARGUING IN TERMS OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS. IN SPITE OF THE IMPLICATION IN THE EARLIER CHIH HENG ARTICLE (REF A) THAT PURSUIT OF ECONOMIC GOALS WAS ENGENDERING DISREGARD FOR IDEOLOGICAL PRIORITIES, THESE ARTICLES SEEM TO BE ARGUING THAT CONCENTRATION ON CLASS STRUGGLE IS GOOD PRECISELY BECAUSE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, IT CONTRIBUTES TO NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THEIR

PUBLICATION IS A SIGN THAT THE LEADERSHIP IS DETERMINED
THAT CHINA'S DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES ARE NOT TO BE
LOST SIGHT OF IN THE INCREASINGLY VOCAL DISCUSSION OF
THE RESULTS OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION.
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